



BRIAN E. FROSH, MARYLAND ATTORNEY GENERAL

PRESS RELEASE

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Attorney General Frosh's Statement on Price-Gouging in Maryland

BALTIMORE, MD – Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh today issued the following statement on the issue of price gouging in Maryland:

"In the first months of the pandemic, consumers were subjected to increased costs of essential items like toilet paper, hand sanitizer, cleaning supplies, food items, just to name a few. The General Assembly acted swiftly and passed legislation providing my office temporary authority to pursue alleged instances of price gouging. Over the last year, my Consumer Protection Division received hundreds of complaints from consumers, and our office was able to use the emergency authority to get retailers that were the subject of complaints to reduce their prices.

"We have recently received dozens of complaints about increases in gasoline prices related to the cyber-attack of the Colonial Pipeline. Our authority expired at the end of April. I have supported, as a legislator and as Attorney General, efforts in previous years to enact legislation that prohibits price-gouging whenever Maryland is in a state of emergency. The world in which we live is full of unwelcome surprises - from attacks by hackers on critical infrastructure, to worldwide pandemics, to devastating weather incidents. Maryland consumers need protection from price-gouging in all these emergency situations. I will work with Senate and House leaders during the next legislative session to ensure that this type of emergency authority, already available in most other states, is established so that our office can act in a timely fashion to protect consumers from unscrupulous individuals who seek to take unfair advantage of their neighbors."

<https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2021/051321.pdf>